

# Light and Lighting

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Vol. XLVI.—No. 8.

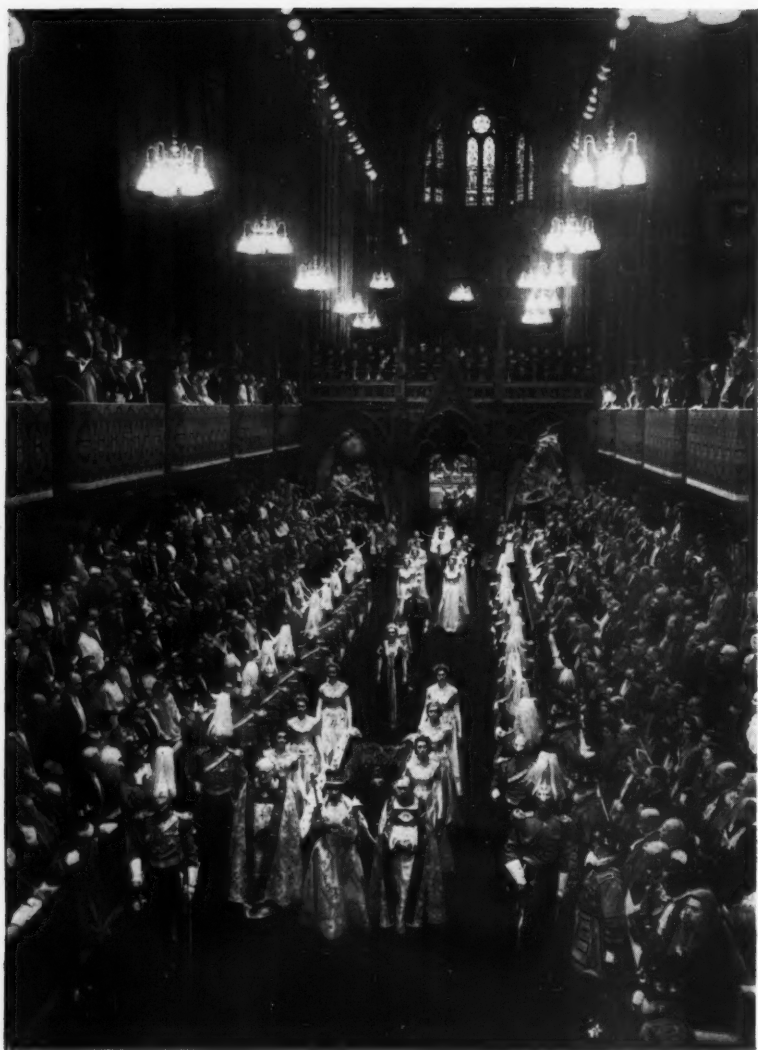
August, 1953

One Shilling and Sixpence

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## Coronation Lighting

VERBAL DESCRIPTIONS are poor substitutes for pictorial representations of sights, and so we can give our readers a more adequate idea of some of the outstanding scenes “painted” by Coronation lighting by a liberal use of pictures than by any profusion of words. We hope this album of photographs will be to our readers an interesting and valued souvenir of Her Majesty’s Coronation. But even photographs cannot convey to the viewer the full beauty of the scenes they depict—beauty that could only be appreciated completely and vividly by those who saw the original scenes for themselves. Fortunately, some at least of the spectacles created by Coronation lighting were seen by a multitude of people and, perhaps, by most of our readers. To them, our pictures will recall the pleasure they must have experienced on witnessing the displays, of which we now present the best record at our command. To others, we hope our pictures will be no less welcome.



*The State procession in the Nave of Westminster Abbey after the Coronation ceremony. The lighting installation in the Abbey on that occasion was itself an outstanding*

*technical achievement, having to fulfil the exacting requirements for colour films and television whilst at the same time avoiding any discomfort to those inside the Abbey.*

## Foreword

*Floodlighting and Decorative Lighting have become a traditional part of national rejoicing or celebration. On such occasions lighting engineers throughout the country are called upon to exercise their skill in lighting famous and beautiful buildings and in decorating our streets and public places at night. A special distinction was given to the Coronation lighting by Her Majesty the Queen, who herself switched on the lights from the balcony of Buckingham Palace.*

*Much of the lighting of public buildings in London was the responsibility of the Ministry of Works as also was the decoration of the Mall which, next to Buckingham Palace, was the centrepiece of attraction by day and by night. Many of the Coronation floodlighting installations had been carried out previously, but the opportunity was taken to use new types of fittings and light sources and so enhance the beauty of the buildings under floodlighting conditions.*

*During the last twenty years or so since we in this country first showed the possibility of large-scale floodlighting, we have from time to time shown our abilities in the field of decorative outdoor illumination. The Coronation provided not only another opportunity for us to show our skill but also a challenge to produce new decorative lighting effects; I feel that the engineers and designers concerned are to be congratulated on the results they achieved.*

David Eccles

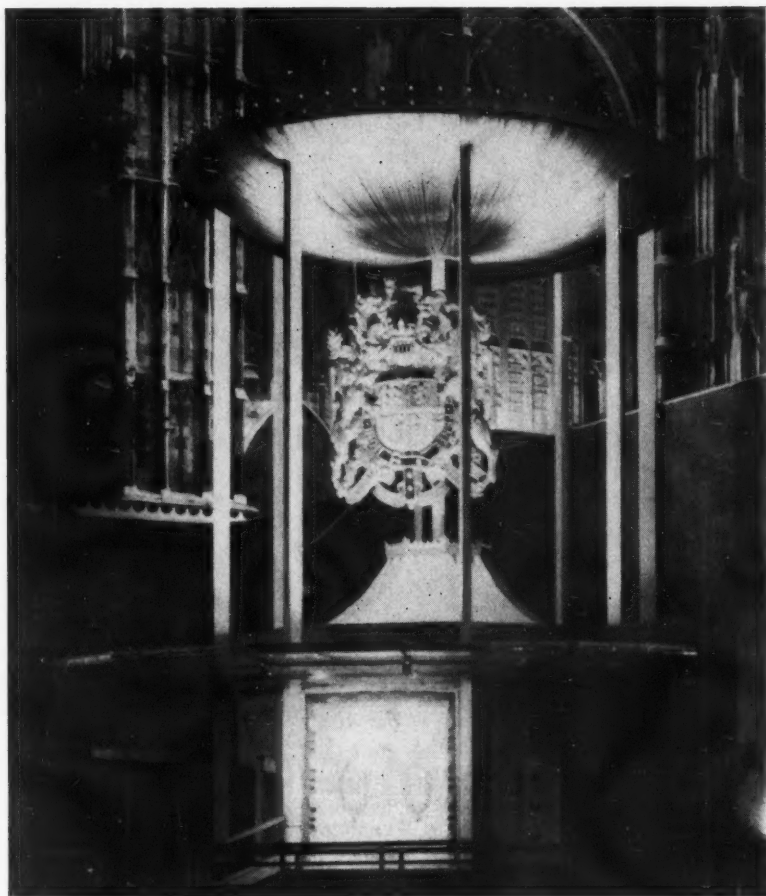
Minister of Works.

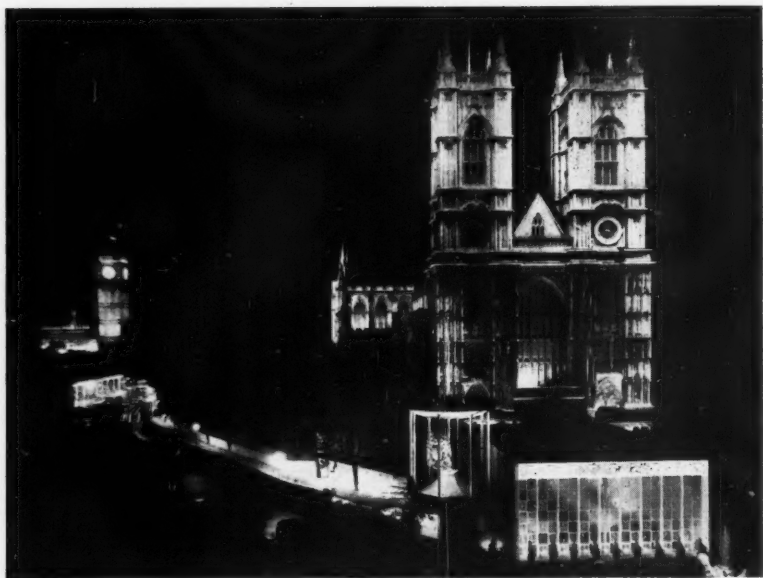


*The thoughts of millions of people of the Commonwealth and other nations were centred upon the Abbey on June 2. Since that date many thousands have visited the Abbey by day and night.*



*The regal appearance of the Annexe, the entrance to which, surmounted by a beautifully worked coat of arms under a royal blue canopy, was further enhanced at night by floodlighting. The flag over the canopy was picked out by four spotlights.*





*Other attractions in the vicinity of the Abbey included the massive stands which, with their gay colours and armorial bearings, made an unusual but striking subject for floodlighting. The clock tower of the Palace of Westminster—popularly, though erroneously, known as Big Ben—was, of course, floodlit.*



*The greatest centre of attraction, as always on such occasions, was the Mall, the scheme of decoration and lighting of which had excited interest long before June 2. The golden arches topped by the Lion and Unicorn, and supporting large but light and delicate crowns,*



*stood out brilliantly against the night sky in the light from the lamps mounted inconspicuously near the foot of each limb of the arches. The lights in the Mall were switched on by Her Majesty the Queen from the balcony of Buckingham Palace.*

*The above view shows the four arches receding in the distance towards Buckingham Palace. It also shows the lighted banners and crowns which were erected on either side of the Mall. On the right is Carlton House Terrace, from the roof of which a spotlight picks out the Duke of York monument.*

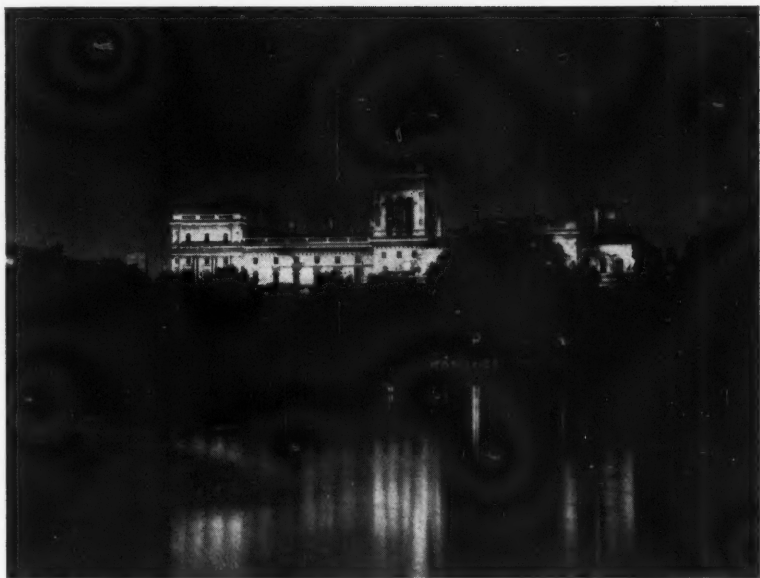
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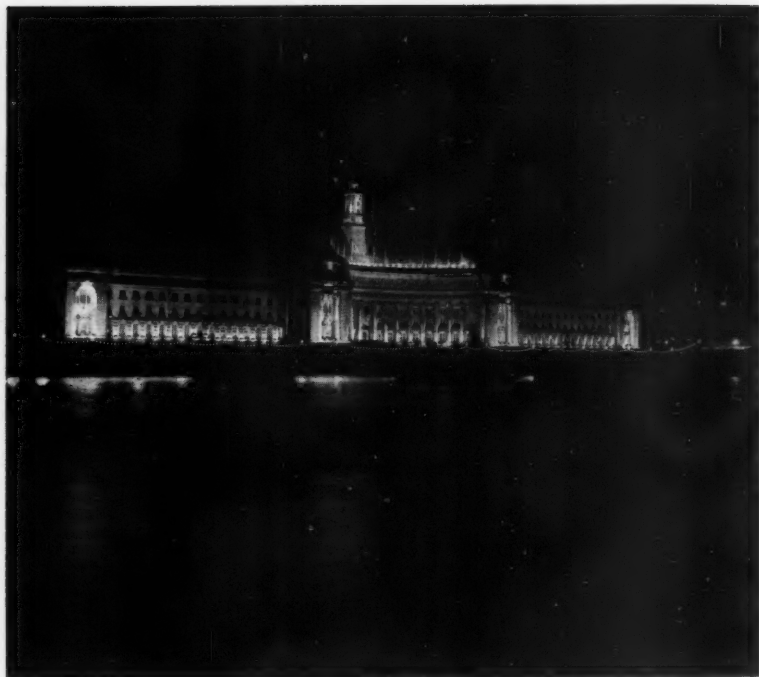
*As the arches and decorations of the Mall came to life at dusk on June 2, the lighting of the Admiralty Arch and Nelson's Column was also switched on, the latter serving as a signal for illuminating other buildings and decorations from Whitehall and Westminster through the City to St. Paul's Cathedral and the Tower.*



*In the lighting and decoration of Whitehall a challenge was offered by Parliament and Trafalgar Squares at either end, the former with its decorated stands and the latter with its floodlit fountains and buildings. Many of the Ministry buildings, including the War Office (shown above), the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the United Services Museum and the Horse Guards, were bathed in soft light which together with the*



*decorations on the buildings and those erected in the roadway itself gave an unaccustomed festive appearance to this thoroughfare. The above picture shows the Foreign Office as seen across the lake in St. James's Park.*



*Even the River Thames, attractive as it usually is at night with reflections of the Embankment lights, took on a new appearance due to the lighting of buildings on either side. Viewing from one of the bridges the spectacle presented by the various buildings and landmarks stretching to the east and west, one wished that the illuminations could stay for ever. One of the features of the 1951 Exhibition was the view of the floodlit north bank from the exhibition site; though the exhibition has long*

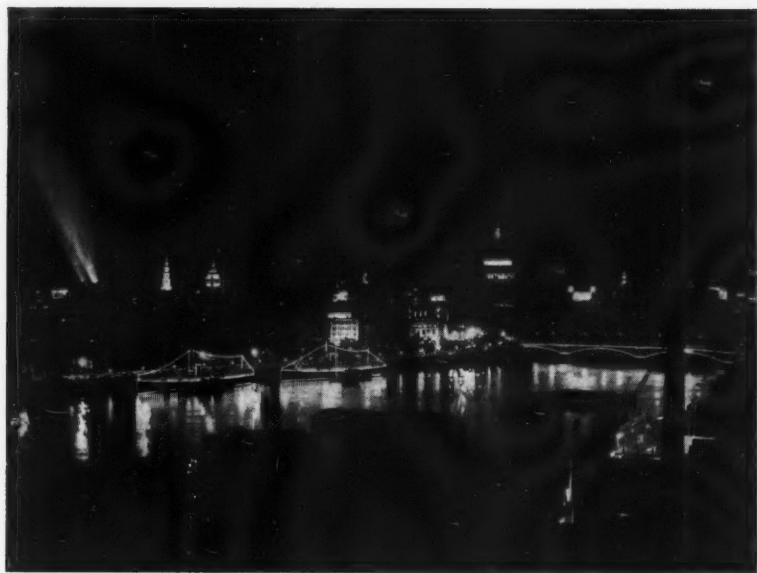




*since been dismantled, the area is still open and the picture above shows one of the many attractive views which can be obtained from the site.*



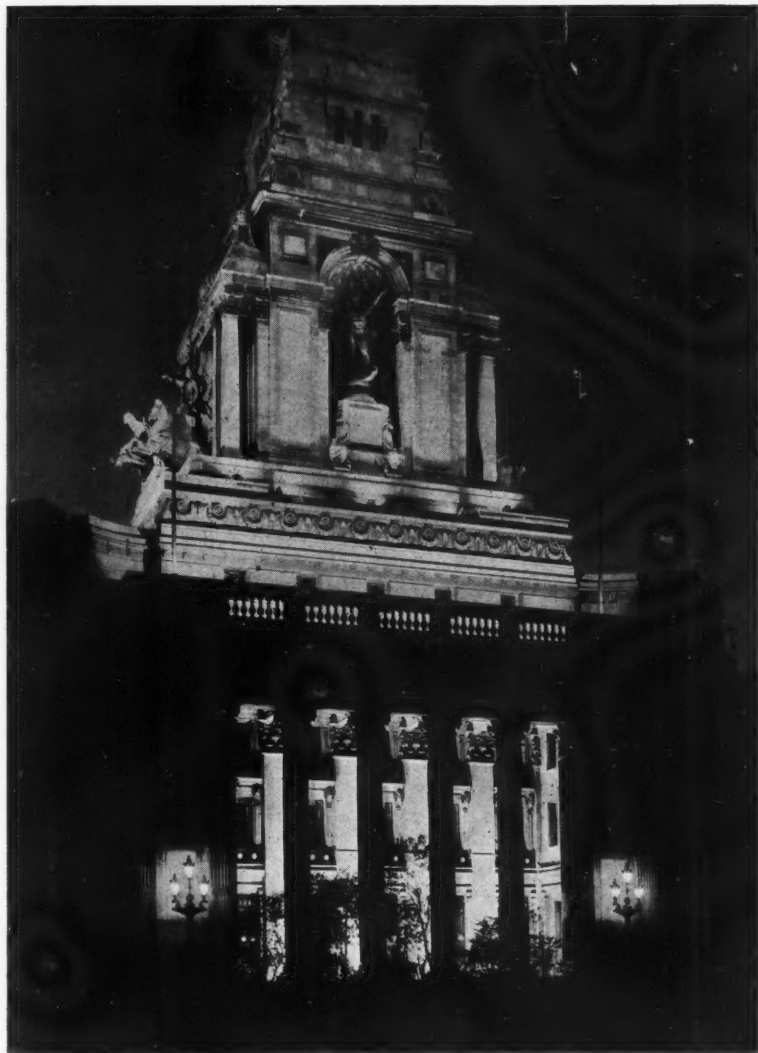
*One of the best places for a panoramic view of London by night is the roof of the Festival Hall. The top of the Shot Tower, from which the above and facing pictures were taken, is also a good vantage point. The above picture, showing Somerset House, was taken on the night of June 2 as crowds gathered on the bridges and along the Embankment to see the fireworks which terminated the day's celebrations.*



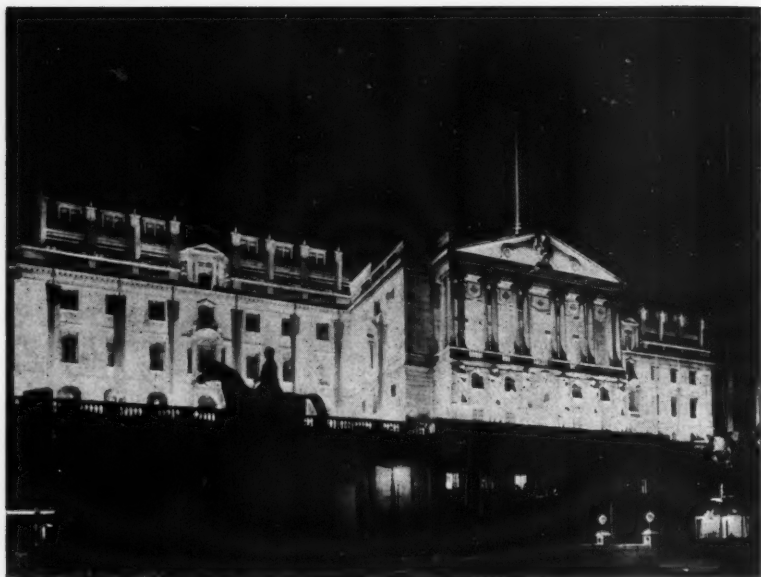
*The above picture shows Blackfriars Bridge and two of the ships which are permanently tied up alongside the Embankment, all of which are outlined with electric lamps. On the skyline one sees a number of the City churches and the crown-like dome of St. Paul's.*



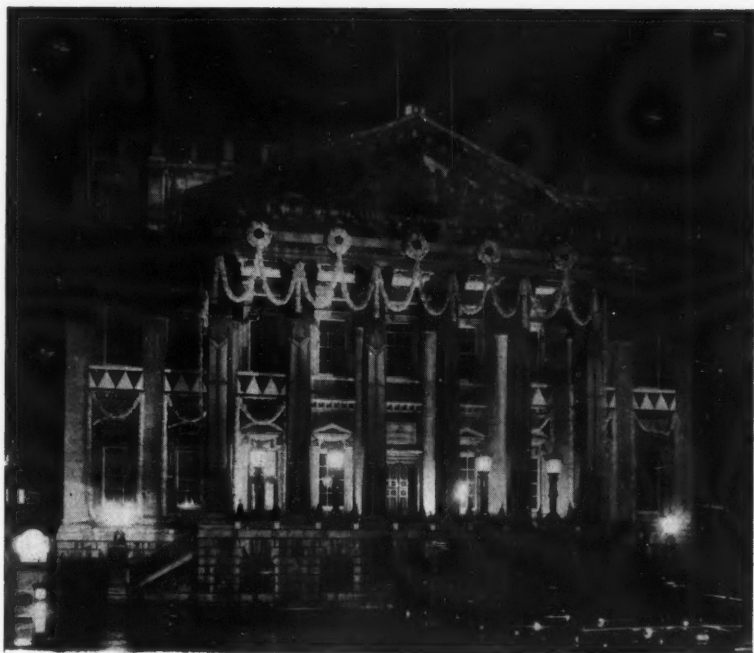
*No decorative lighting scheme of the City of London would be complete without the lighting of Tower Bridge, the gateway to London from the sea. Our trip down river has now brought us well into the City itself, and it is appropriate that, after the Tower of London, one of the*



*first floodlit buildings to be seen should be the headquarters building of the Port of London Authority on Tower Hill.*



*On festive occasions the City of London, the centre of the world's commerce, is not to be outdone by the neighbouring City of Westminster, or for that matter by any other city, town or borough. The wealth of beautiful buildings which still remain in spite of the losses suffered in the last war offer many subjects for floodlighting, though, due to the narrow streets, it is often impossible to view them to the best advantage or, in fact, to photograph many of them. Many buildings, not only in the City, have been excluded from this brief record*



*because they are well known for their appearance under floodlighting. Such is the case with St. Paul's Cathedral (though a distant view is given in other pictures). To many people mention of the City conjures up pictures of the Bank of England and the Mansion House, the two buildings which are shown above.*



*The London skyline by night. On the left can be seen the top of one of the arches in the Mall as well as Carlton House Terrace and, away to the north, the tower of the London University building in Bloomsbury. In the centre foreground is the Horse Guards with the War Office beyond. Slightly to the right can be seen the top of the new block of Government offices in Whitehall which was included in the Ministry of Works scheme of lighting*





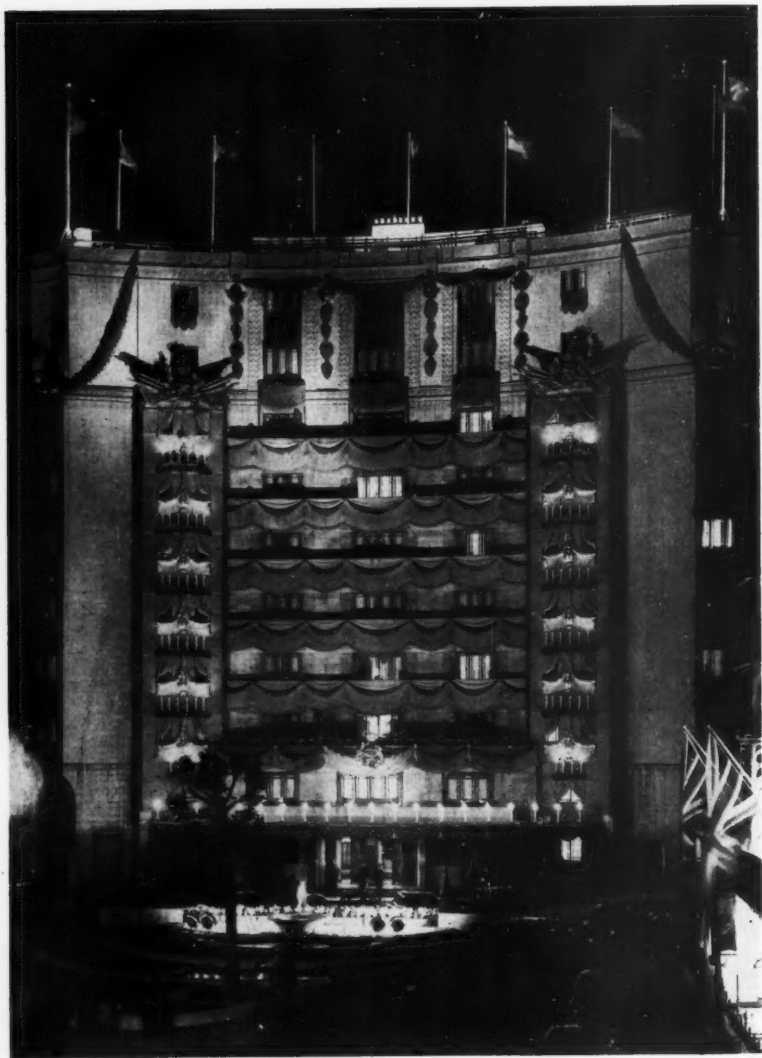
*the skyline of buildings visible from the Mall. To the right of that can be seen the top of the Shot Tower on the South Bank and the Festival Hall with the spires of some of the City churches just visible in the far distance. Further to the right is the chimney of the new Bankside power station, the County Hall and the Big Ben clock tower. On the extreme right are the familiar towers of Westminster Abbey.*



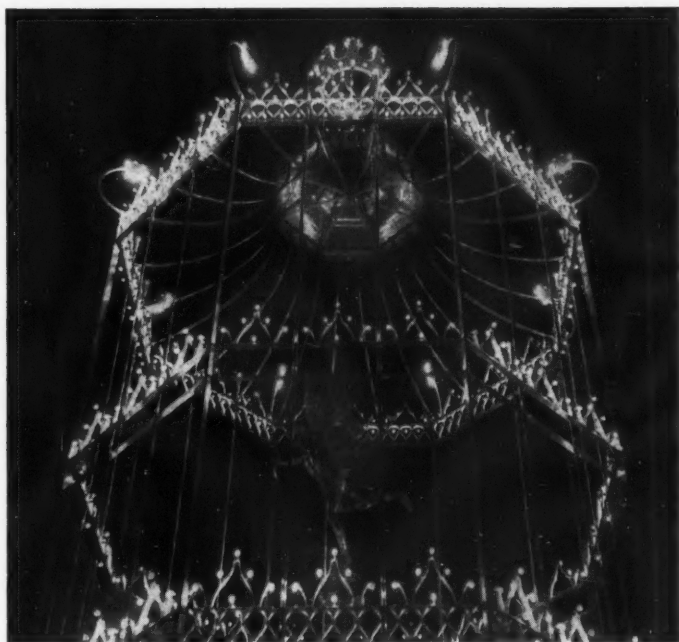
*The City is well known for its churches, the spires of which make such an attractive feature of the London skyline particularly at night when floodlit. The picture above is of St. Dunstan-in-the-West, Fleet Street.*



*As an example of the many little-known buildings of architectural merit which were floodlit for the Coronation we show above a view of Burgh House, Hampstead, one of the finest Queen Anne buildings in the country.*

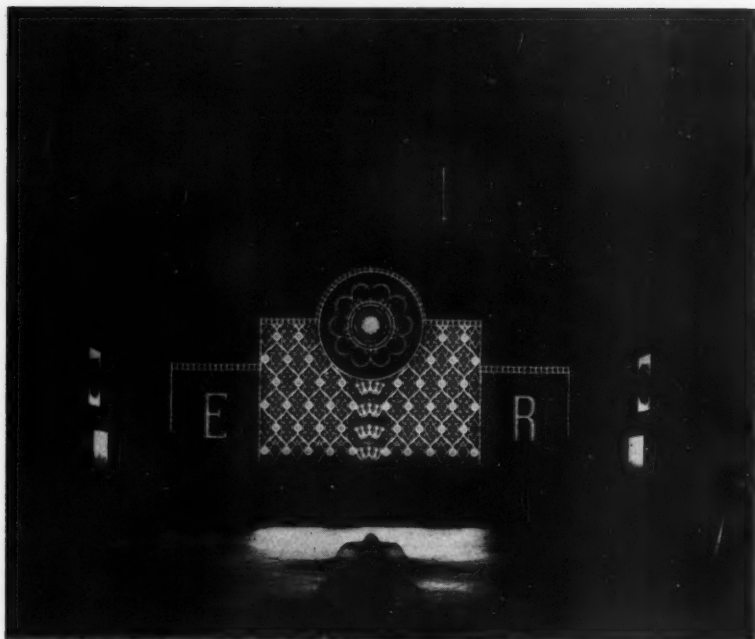


*It was not, however, only famous churches and old buildings which were brightened by the Coronation floodlighting. Many hotels throughout the country have permanent flood-*



lighting installations; others made special arrangements for the occasion. An outstanding example was that of the Dorchester Hotel in Park Lane, where the elaborate decorations were further enhanced by night. In addition to floodlighting the scene was enlivened by gas candles over the entrance canopy and groups of electric candles up each side.

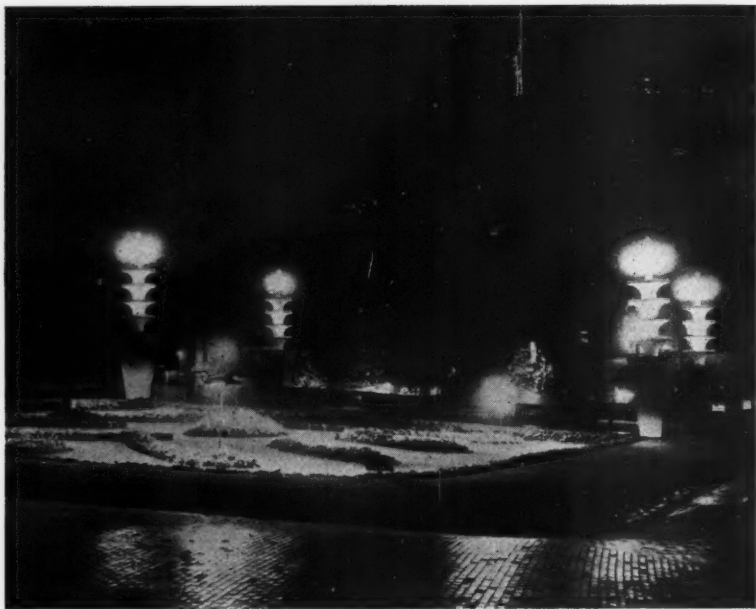
On occasions of national rejoicing it is usual for large crowds to gather in Piccadilly Circus and for the Shaftesbury Memorial, better known as Eros, to be suitably protected. For the Coronation Eros was given a gilded cage decorated with bare low-wattage filament lamps.



*The Festival Pleasure Gardens in Battersea Park have become widely known to the public since they were first opened in 1951. Decorative lighting has always been one of the attractions of the gardens by night; an addition this year is the Lumascope which consists of over 5,000 lamps arranged in various designs representing crowns, diamonds, fleurs-de-lis and roses. The lamps are controlled by a flasher so that though there is a lighting change every few seconds the complete cycle of variations takes some 13 minutes.*



*It was not only in the Capital that lighting was called upon to make its contribution to the celebrations. Throughout the country flood-lighting and decorative lighting added to the gaiety and rejoicing of the nation. A feature of the decorations carried out in the historic city of Canterbury, which at least has a nominal connection with the actual crowning ceremony, was a large illuminated crown in a prominent position near the city wall.*

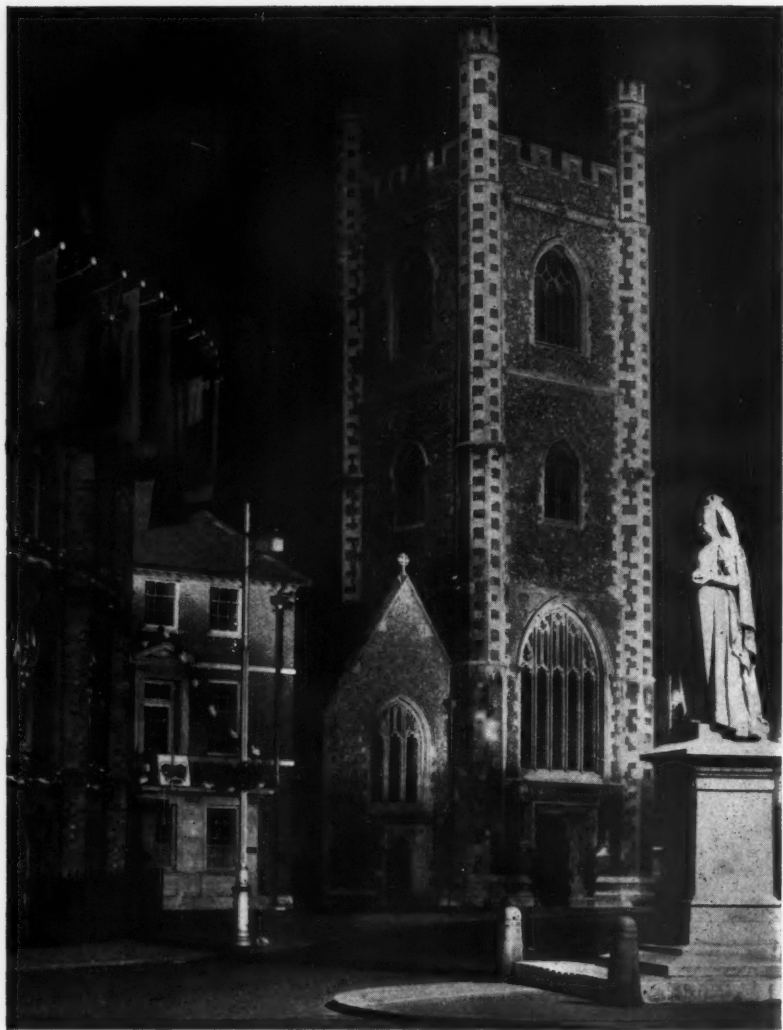


*In choosing subjects for floodlighting or selecting places which will respond to decorative lighting, the engineer naturally chooses those which make his task as easy as possible; and when the result is admired the lighting engineer is perhaps inclined, however unconsciously, to take some of the credit which is really due to the magnificence of the architecture or the beauty of the landscape. The more difficult task is to make simple, almost commonplace, surroundings attractive by night. Liverpool has a number of fine buildings which look well at night, but the above example of garden lighting in the centre of that city is shown as typical of the decorative lighting installed to brighten up many of our industrial cities and towns.*

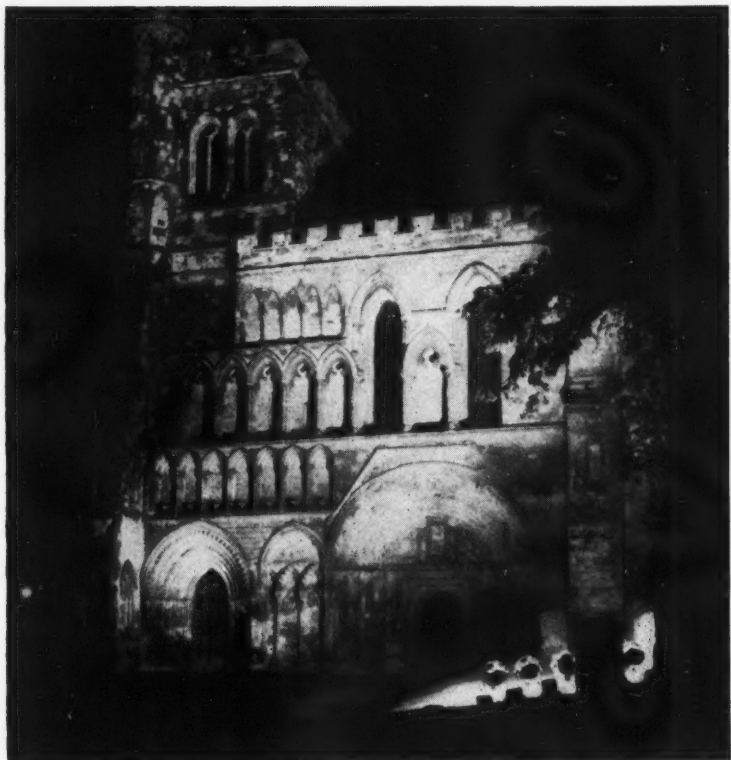




*From our centres of commercial and industrial activity it is usually only a short distance to the quiet of the countryside, though places like Ludlow Castle, shown above, are a reminder that the countryside was not always quiet. Fortunately the purpose for which this castle was built over 800 years ago no longer exists, and one can view the castle by day or night without having to suffer from the slings and arrows of those who guarded the frontier between England and Wales.*



*It is not every town in the country which can claim to have any great architectural merit or to contain within its boundaries buildings of national or historic importance. The traveller from London to the west perhaps sees little*



to arrest his attention as he passes through Reading, though, like so many other towns, Reading has its attractive corners which become even more attractive under floodlighting, as shown by the picture of St. Laurence's Church and the Queen Victoria Statue on the facing page.

A different style of architecture which responds well to floodlighting is shown by the picture of Dunstable Priory Church, which is, of course, a very much older building.

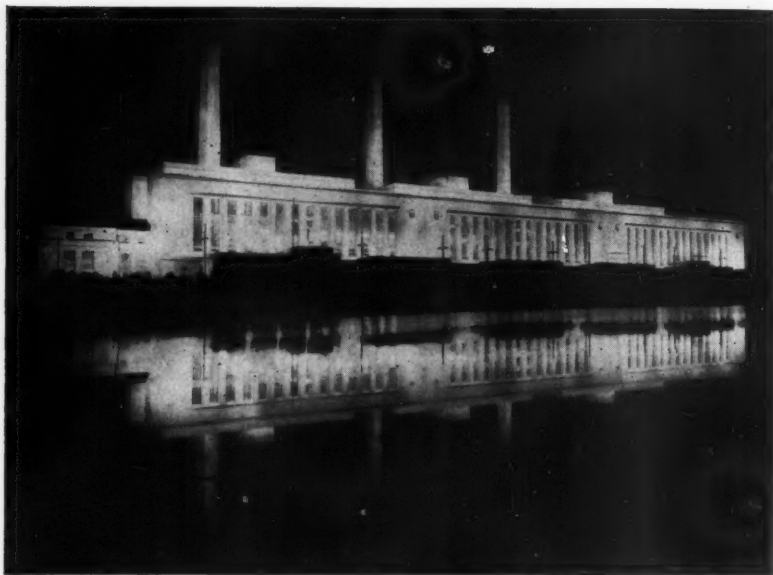


*The visitor to England must get the impression that the country is full of ruined, or semi-ruined, abbeys, castles and priories. Perhaps it is, but each is different and each has its special appeal. From its very name one realises that Much Wenlock Priory has a long history. Its origin is in the distant past and it has been destroyed and rebuilt many times. Restoration work has been carried out on it even during the present century but it is doubtful if any of those who during the centuries have contributed to its rebuilding (or destruction) ever thought that in 1953 additional beauty would be given to it by floodlighting.*

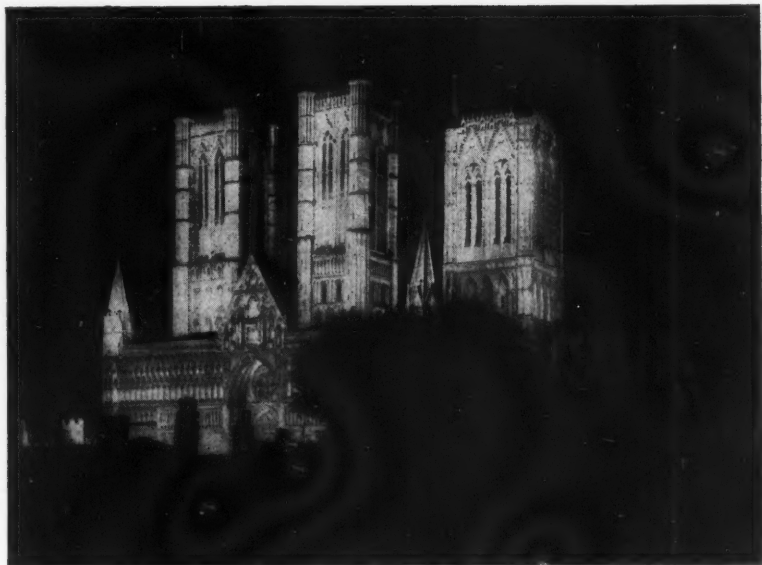
*One of those who helped to restore the*



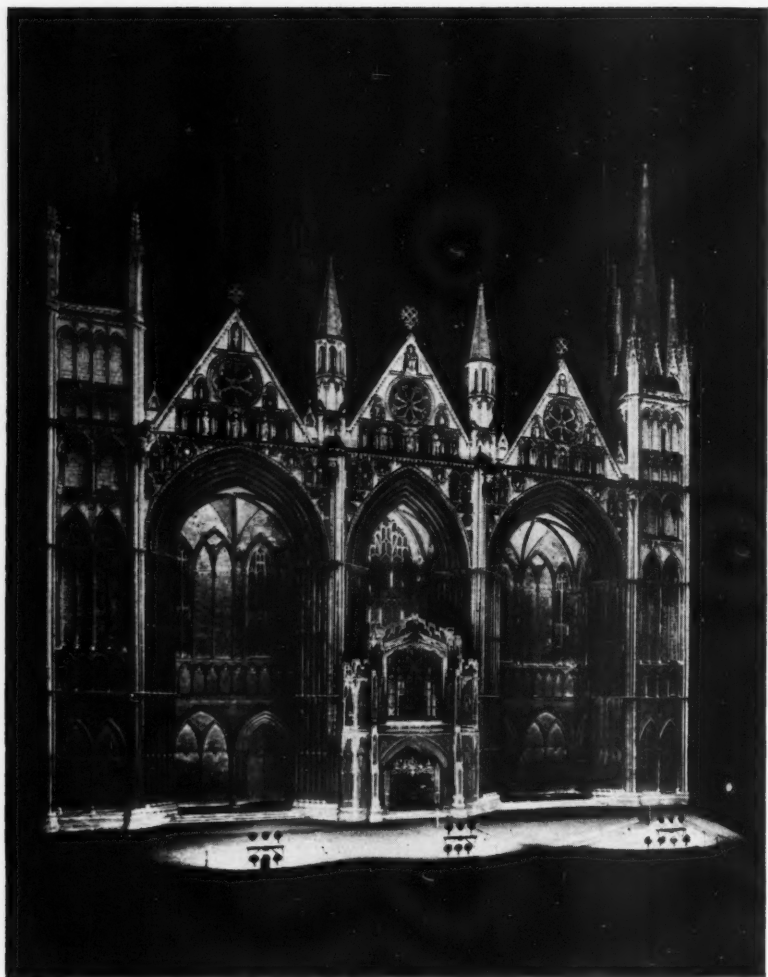
*Priory was Lady Godiva, from whom it is an obvious step to the City of Coventry whose cathedral was destroyed a few years ago. The church shown above is that of Holy Trinity, the slender tapering spire of which is a landmark for miles around.*



*Many industrial buildings, large and small, now make use of floodlighting either permanently or on special occasions; a factory or power station which is in an isolated yet prominent position is at an advantage when it wishes to draw attention to itself at night. Such is the case with the new Staythorpe Power Station situated on the bank of the River Trent on the outskirts of Newark. The proximity of the river, as seen by the above picture, is an added advantage—the still waters of the Trent make an almost perfect mirror (unlike the turbulent Thames which will keep still for no one).*



*One of the most satisfying subjects to floodlight must surely be a cathedral — and the task of lighting the lovely Lincoln Cathedral must be one of the best of all. The beautiful west front calls for delicate treatment to reveal the intricate detail of the tracery and projecting features. The three towers, the centre one of which is 269 ft. high, make a perfect picture against the night sky.*



*Peterborough provides another example of cathedral floodlighting. The thirteenth-century builders made a feature of their west fronts which demand skilful treatment in the hands of the twentieth-century lighting engineer.*





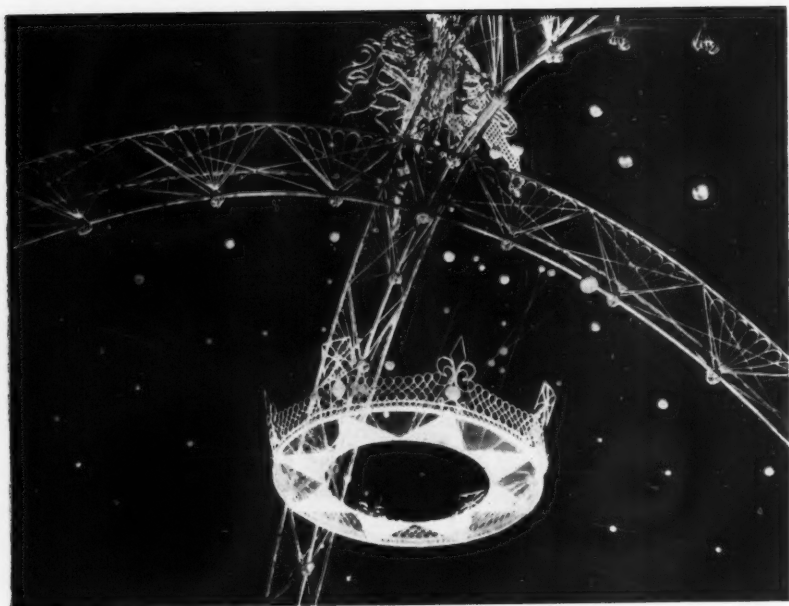
*Edinburgh Castle, high on its rock overlooking the city and the Firth of Forth, provides as attractive a floodlighting feature as any to be found. From a distance the castle appears to be suspended in mid-air though, from nearby, it looks by night even more solid and firmly rooted upon the rock on which it is built than it does by day. The rambling battlements form a perspective which is difficult to capture in a photograph. Silhouetted against the night sky it has a grim and forbidding aspect when compared with, say, the graceful towers of a cathedral—though the night sky in Edinburgh during the summer months is never as dark as the above picture might lead one to believe.*



*Though its walls may be as thick as those of Edinburgh Castle and its history just as long, Windsor Castle is still a Royal residence and presents a slightly less aggressive and forbidding appearance. Like Edinburgh, however, it is situated on a height and, whether it is seen from the river below, from the Home Park beyond, or from the distant hills it is instantly recognised by us all as the place where our Royal Family may find some relaxation from the duties which surround them in the nearby Capital.*



*And so back to London and to Buckingham Palace, from the balcony of which Her Majesty operated the switch which brought into "life," throughout the country, the floodlighting and decorative lighting—of which this review can show but only a small part—to commemorate the historic event which had that day taken place in Westminster Abbey. Just as millions were able to see the Coronation ceremony itself in the Abbey through the medium of television, so were they able to see the Queen switch on the lights in the Mall and beyond—and the obvious pleasure and happiness which this gave Her Majesty must alone have been sufficient reward to those who had been technically responsible for the lighting.*



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- 290 Interior of Westminster Abbey. The lighting of the interior of the Abbey for the Coronation was designed by the Ministry of Works and Holophane, Ltd. The equipment consisted of 144 specially designed 1,000-watt Holophane projector fittings using Class B projector lamps installed at Triforium level (approximately 70 ft. high); the existing candelabra fittings were adapted to take gold-tinted Holophane reflectors with 500-watt photo-pearl lamps on dimmer control in conjunction with the overhead floods.
- 292 The lighting of the West Front of the Abbey (exclusive of the Annexe) was achieved with 23 1,000-watt, 16 500-watt, and three 5,000-watt projectors. The 5,000-watt projectors (Mole Richardson "Solar Spot" using Philips 5,000-watt lamps) were used to light the tops of the West Towers and were located on nearby buildings. The total floodlighting load for the Abbey, including the Henry VII Chapel, was 108 kw. Ministry of Works photograph (Crown copyright reserved).
- 293 The entrance of the Annexe to Westminster Abbey. The Coat of Arms is lighted from behind the fascia by 10 150-watt silvered lamps; three similar lamps behind the Coat of Arms illuminate the valarium ceiling. The window wall (see p. 292) is lighted by 150-watt silvered lamps placed behind each of the Queen's Beasts which are thereby shown in silhouette. Ministry of Works photograph (Crown copyright reserved).
- 294 Westminster Abbey—see above. The Clock Tower of the Houses of Parliament was lighted by 13 5,000-watt and 51 1,000-watt projectors with 28 300-watt lamps in the belfry.
- 295 The decorative lighting in the Mall was carried out by the Ministry of Works. Two Philips "Altrilux" (500-watt silvered) lamps on each of the four legs were used to light the arches and the coronets. Additional smaller lamps concealed in the tops of the arches served to light the lions and unicorns.
- 296 The Mall—see above. Philips 5,000-watt lamps were used for lighting the Duke of York statue. Carlton House Terrace was illuminated by tungsten projectors, the total load (both blocks) being 83 kw.
- 297 Trafalgar Square.
- 298 War Office, Whitehall, lighted by the Ministry of Works. Projectors located on buildings on the opposite side of the road. Decorative Helmets, part of the Westminster City Council scheme, were lighted by Philips "Altrilux" lamps in projectors placed on adjacent rooftops.
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- 302 Somerset House floodlighted by the Ministry of Works using 73 projectors with a total load of 58 kw. Photograph by Aerofilms, Ltd.
- 303 The Embankment, showing Blackfriars Bridge, etc. Photograph by Aerofilms, Ltd.
- 304 Tower Bridge. Lighting scheme planned by the Surveyor of the City of London using over 1,000 15-watt Siemens lamps.
- 305 Headquarters of the Port of London Authority on Tower Hill under G.E.C. floodlighting using 23 tungsten projectors giving a total load of 20 kw.
- 306 Bank of England illuminated by 29 G.E.C. tungsten projectors, the total load being 27 kw.

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- 307 Mansion House floodlighted by the City of London Corporation. Six 1,000-watt fittings under the portico, four 1,000-watt projectors located on buildings on the opposite side of the road, and two 200-watt local fittings behind the pediment.
- 308-309 Skyline of London. Ministry of Works photograph (Crown copyright reserved).
- 310 St. Dunstan-in-the-West, Fleet Street, floodlighted by the City of London Corporation, using seven 1,000-watt projectors, six 200-watt local fittings, two 100-watt fittings to illuminate the giants, and two 100-watt fittings to illuminate the clock.
- 311 Burgh House, Hampstead. Floodlighting by means of B.T.H. sodium floodlights.
- 312 Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane. Decorations designed by Oliver Messel. "Candles" over the canopy lit by "Calor" Gas, those on either side being electric. Floodlighting by means of tungsten projectors fitted with blue filters. Lighting by the Strand Electric and Engineering Co., Ltd.
- 313 Eros, Piccadilly Circus. Decorations carried out by J. Starkie Gardner, Ltd., for the Westminster City Council, using approximately 800 lamps, mainly 24-volt 12-watt. Copyright photograph by LIGHT METALS (Temple Press, Ltd.).
- 314 Lumascope at Battersea Pleasure Gardens. Manufactured and installed by the Strand Electric and Engineering Co., Ltd. Size approximately 120 ft. by 60 ft. Over 5,000 lamps used with a total load of 80 kw. Controlled by a flasher giving a lighting change every three seconds without a repeat for 13 minutes.
- 315 Illuminated Crown on the mound in the Dane John Gardens at Canterbury. Designed by the City Architect's Department. The crown is 15 ft. in diameter and 25 ft. high. Over 250 lamps of varying sizes used with a total load of 10 kw. The colours of the jewels are produced by coloured filters.
- 316 St. John's Gardens, Liverpool. Lighting designed by the City Lighting Department, using mushroom-type fittings for the flower-beds and precast plaster pylons each containing 32 15-watt tungsten lamps.
- 317 Ludlow Castle, Shropshire, floodlighted by Benjamin "Duoflux" and "Specular" floodlights.
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- 321 Holy Trinity Church, Coventry. Floodlighted with Revo projectors, four 1,000-watt narrow beam and nine 1,000-watt medium beam.
- 322 Staythorpe Power Station. Scheme prepared by the Edison Swan Electric Co., Ltd., who also supplied the equipment used. The number of projectors used was 110, the total load being 102.5 kw.
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- 325 Edinburgh Castle.
- 326 Windsor Castle floodlighted by the Ministry of Works, using tungsten, sodium, and mercury lamps. Tungsten projectors included 156 1,000-watt and 52 500-watt; 167 B.T.H. 140-watt sodium projectors were used and six 250-watt mercury projectors.
- 327 Buckingham Palace floodlighted by the Ministry of Works. The façade is lighted by 18 5,000-watt projectors and 20 1,000-watt fittings. Additional lighting is provided for the balconies, including six 1,000-watt projectors for the centre balcony.
- 328 Coronet in the Mall. Photographed by Jack Scheerboom.

